What is claimed is:

1. An elongate base for a patient supporting platform, comprising;

a frame;

first and second hydraulic jacks mounted at spaced apart locations on said frame adjacent opposite ends thereof, each of said first and second hydraulic jacks being configured to connect to said patient supporting platform for effecting a lifting and lowering of said patient supporting platform relative to said frame, said first and second hydraulic jacks each having a reciprocal input mechanism for effecting when reciprocated a lifting of the respective end of the patient supporting platform, each said reciprocal input mechanism having a first part of a two part releasable connection thereon;

a manually operable member and a mount for mounting said manually operable member for reciprocal movement relative to said frame; and

a first linkage member having thereon a pair of longitudinally spaced second parts of each of said two part releasable connections, each said second part being releasably connected to a respective one of said first parts to effect a connecting of said manually operable member to each of said input mechanisms, said first linkage being configured to convert the reciprocal movement of said manually operable member to a reciprocal movement of said first linkage member to effect a simultaneous lifting of said patient supporting platform in response to the reciprocal movement of said first linkage member.

2. The elongate base according to Claim 1, wherein each said first part is an elongate rod having a first section of a first diameter, said first section having an

annular groove therein defining a second section of a second diameter less than said first diameter;

wherein each said second part is a plate connected to said first linkage member and having a two sector opening therethrough, a first sector of said opening being configured for reception of said first section of said elongate rod therethrough so as to facilitate installation and removal of said first linkage member, said second sector of said opening being smaller in size than said first sector and being configured to receive therein only said second section of said elongate rod so as to facilitate a securement of said first linkage member to each of said reciprocal input mechanisms to thereby facilitate simultaneous operation of said reciprocal input mechanisms in response to reciprocal movement of said first linkage member.

3. The elongate base according to Claim 2, wherein said second sector is oriented vertically above said first sector so that a self-contained weight of said first linkage member will cause said second section of said elongate rod to operatively remain in said second sector during reciprocal movement of said first linkage member.

4. An elongate base for a patient supporting platform, comprising:

a frame;

first and second hydraulic jacks mounted at spaced apart locations on said frame adjacent opposite ends thereof, each of said first and second hydraulic jacks being configured to connect to said patient supporting platform for effecting a lifting and lowering of said patient supporting platform relative to said frame, said first and second hydraulic jacks having a reciprocal

input mechanism for effecting when reciprocated a lowering of said patient supporting platform, each said reciprocal input mechanism having a first part of a two part releasable connection thereon;

a first manually operable member and a first mount for supporting said first manually operable member for reciprocal movement relative to said frame;

a first linkage member having thereon a pair of longitudinally spaced second parts of each of said first two part releasable connection, each said second part being releasably connected to said first parts to effect a connecting of said first manually operable member to said reciprocal input mechanism, said first linkage including a releasable coupling mechanism interconnecting said first linkage member and said first manually operable member;

a second manually operable member and a second mount for supporting said second manually operable member for reciprocal movement relative to said frame;

a second linkage member having thereon a second part of said first two part releasable connection, each said second part being releasably connected to said first parts to effect a connecting of said second manually operable member to said reciprocal input mechanism, said second linkage member including a releasable coupling mechanism interconnecting said second linkage member and said second manually operable member.

5. The elongate base according to Claim 4, wherein said first and second linkage members are both elongate rods, wherein each reciprocal input mechanism includes a rod receiving pocket thereon, each said pocket releasably receiving therein one end of a respective said elongate rod to thereby define said first part of said first two part releasable connections thereat, each said elongate

rod having a respective opposite end and one part of a second two part releasable connection thereat, said first and second manually operable members each having a second part of said second two part releasable connection operatively coupled to respective said one parts.

6. A wheeled carriage for supporting a patient in a substantially horizontal position, comprising:

a patient support having head and foot ends and a pair of lateral sides intermediate said head and foot ends and a base supported on at least four floor surface engaging and castered wheels;

brake means for braking and unbraking each of said floor surface engaging wheels, said brake means including a moveable control means moveable between a first position whereat said brake means brakes each wheel and a second position whereat said brake means is unbraked, said control means including a first control element oriented on an axis parallel to a longitudinal axis of said patient support and having a first manually manipulatible member connected to said first control element, said first manually manipulatible member being oriented adjacent at least one of said head and foot ends, whereby an attendant can operate said first manually manipulatible member from said at least one of said head and foot ends to effect a braking or unbraking of said wheels;

said control element including at least one linkage member interconnecting to a first position of a multiple position releasable catch for holding said control element rotatably affixed until sufficient force is applied by the attendant to effect a release of said catch means and a rotative movement of said control element to a further position whereat said at last one linkage member interconnects said control element to a

second position of said multiple position releasable catch means;

wherein said brake means includes at least one elastically yieldable elongate bar extending transversely of a longitudinal axis of said wheeled carriage and has adjacent opposite ends thereof a wheel engaging member, said elongate bar being suspended from said wheeled carriage by at least a pair of laterally spaced springs so that said wheel engaging members are spaced from a peripheral surface of said castered wheels;

a cam member pivotally secured to said elongate bar and being suspended therefrom, said cam member having at least two cam follower receiving positions thereon;

a cam follower mounted on said wheeled carriage and configured to operatively engage a cam surface on said cam member, said pair of laterally spaced springs effecting a maintenance of engagement of said cam follower with said cam surface; and

a linkage member interconnecting said control element with said cam member to effect, in response to an operation of said first manually manipulative member, a pivotal movement of said cam member and a relocation of said cam follower from one of said at least two cam follower receiving positions to another to cause to said elongate bar and said wheel engaging members thereon to be pulled downwardly against an urging of said at least a pair of laterally spaced springs and to cause said wheel engaging members to engage said peripheral surfaces of said castered wheels.

7. The wheeled carriage according to Claim 6, wherein an orientation of said cam follower receiving positions will cause said elongate bar to flex as said cam follower enters a selected one of said cam follower

receiving portions indicative of a braked condition of said castered wheels.

8. An elongate base for a patient supporting platform, comprising:

a frame;

a manifold plate mounted on said frame;

a hydraulic jack configured to connect to said patient supporting platform for effecting a lifting and lowering of said patient supporting platform relative to said frame, said manifold plate having connective passageways hydraulically connected to said hydraulic jack and a reciprocal input mechanism for effecting when reciprocated a lowering of said patient supporting platform, said reciprocal input mechanism comprising a plunger reciprocally movably supported in a hollow sleeve and having a region along a length thereof of reduced cross sections, at least one of said connective passageways being hydraulically connected to and extending between a hydraulic fluid reservoir for said hydraulic jack and said region;

a valve member on said plunger oriented adjacent one end of said region and being reciprocally movable with said plunger, a valve seat on said hollow sleeve adjacent said one end of said region at least when said valve member and said valve seat engage one another;

an elastically yieldable member for effecting continual urging of said valve member toward said valve seat;

hydraulic fluid pressure equalizing means on said plunger and said hollow sleeve for assuring equalized fluid pressure acting on both ends of said region so that only a return force of said elastically yieldable member needs to overcome in order to cause movement of said valve member away from said valve seat.

9. The elongate base according to Claim 8, wherein said hydraulic jack is mounted directly onto said manifold plate.

10. The elongate base according to Claim 9, wherein said base includes a manually operable member and a mount for supporting said manually operable member for reciprocal movement relative to said frame.

11. The elongate base according to Claim 10, wherein said base additionally includes an elongate linkage, one end of which is operatively connected to said manually operable member and another end of which is connected to one end of said plunger remote from said valve member.

12. The elongate base according to Claim 11, wherein said one end of said plunger includes a pocket, said one end of said linkage being releasably received in said pocket.